

Seeds and Weeds
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“Again, Jesus began to teach by the lake. . . . He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said, “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. . . . Other seed fell among the thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. . . . Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.” (Mark 4:1a, 2, 7, 18-19)

With these words Jesus tells His story about a farmer who sows his seed. The farmer is God and the seed is the Word.

We read about the seed sown among the thorns. Like the seed sown on rocky soil, it sprouts and grows. This seed is actually in good soil, in fact, it's so good that other plants- weeds and thistles- grow there, too. When the seed has to compete for water and nutrients with the weeds, it is choked out and dies.

As a pastor, this is probably the problem I encounter the most. There are some people out there who have received the word and totally ignored it throughout their lives. There are others who face persecution and wither away. But more than anything, I am confronted by the problem of weeds in people's lives. I can't tell you how many excuses people give for avoiding Jesus.

We all lead busy lives, and we can always find something else to do, even if it's watching TV, reading the paper or visiting a friend.

All of these things can choke out your faith, but the real concern that Jesus has is for, “the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things.” Worry is the opposite of faith. When you worry, you don't trust in God to take care of you. You assume that your problems are too big for God. And you trust in other things, like wealth, to take care of you. As you know, however, your wealth will not ultimately take care of you. Money runs out, and things get lost or stolen or wear out over time. Even if you manage to live a comfortable life here on earth, your wealth will not get you into heaven.

Your only hope is not to trust in wealth or other things, but in Jesus Christ, who died for you. Jesus wore a crown made of the thorns of your sinfulness so that you would have forgiveness and eternal life.